

Amendments to the Claims: This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) ~~A compact compact~~ tripod (1) including at least three legs (2) converging in a spider (3) to which the legs (2) are hinged at one end through corresponding hinge means (13) and counter means (15), and a support (5) for a head (6) mounted in the said spider (3) in a position such that the said support (5) projects from the said spider (3) on ~~the~~ side opposite the said legs (2) when the said tripod (1) is open in an operating position, and in which said hinge means (13) and counter-means (15) are designed to allow the legs (2) to be folded back from that part of the said support (5) when the said tripod (1) is closed in a non-operating position, ~~characterized in that and the said hinge means (13) and counter-means (15) comprise toothed means (27,28) and corresponding stop means for the said toothed means (27,28) which are capable of interacting together to limit the extent by which the said legs (2) open with respect to the said spider (3).~~
2. (Currently Amended) ~~Tripod (1) The tripod~~ according to Claim 1 in which the said hinge means (13) and counter-means (15) are designed to permit relative rotation between the legs (2) and the spider (3) through an angle of 90° or more.
3. (Currently Amended) ~~Tripod (1) The tripod~~ according to Claim 2 in which the said hinge means (13) and counter-means (15) are designed to allow relative rotation between the legs (2) and spider (3) through an angle of between 90° and approximately 180°.
4. (Currently Amended) ~~Tripod (1) The tripod~~ according to ~~any of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 in which the toothed means (27,28) comprise a plurality of teeth (27,28) angularly offset with respect to each other on ~~at the hinge means sleeve (13)~~ of one piece with the said spider, ~~(3) the hinge means being a hinge sleeve, and the said stop means comprise a lever (25) with a shoulder (33) which can be moved on the leg (2) into positions such that it interferes selectively abutting abuts~~ against one of the said teeth (27,28) to limit the angle through which the said leg opens.
5. (Currently Amended) ~~Tripod (1) The tripod~~ according to Claim 4 in which the said teeth (27,28) are positioned on projections coaxial with the ~~said hinge sleeve (13)~~.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~Triped~~ (1) The tripod according to claim 4 or 5 in which a free length (29) is provided on the ~~said~~ hinge sleeve (13) which does not interfere with the ~~said~~ stop means so that when the ~~said~~ stop means are positioned on the ~~said~~ free length (29) the ~~said~~ legs (2) can be folded back between the operating position and the non-operating position.

7. (Currently Amended) ~~Triped~~ (1) The tripod according to ~~one or more of claims 4-6~~ claim 4 in which the ~~said~~ lever (25) is provided with an operating appendage (30) which is accessible from the side opposite the spider (3) when the legs (2) are in the operating position.

8. (Currently Amended) ~~Triped~~ (1) The tripod according to ~~one or more of claims 4-7~~ claim 4 in which the lever (25) is resiliently stressed towards a position in which it engages with a tooth (27) distance from the ~~said~~ free length (29).

9. (Currently Amended) ~~Triped~~ (1) The tripod according to ~~one or more of the preceding claims~~ claim 1 in which the ~~said~~ support (5) is mounted on a column (4) which is movably engaged in the ~~said~~ spider (3) in an adjustable manner.

10. (Currently Amended) ~~Triped~~ (1) The tripod according to claim 9 in which said head, (6) fitted to the ~~said~~ support, (5) is provided with a plate (7) which can be orientated substantially at right angles with respect to ~~the~~ an axis of the column (4) when the tripod (1) is closed in the non-operating position.

11. (New) The tripod according to claim 2, in which the toothed means comprise a plurality of teeth angularly offset with respect to each other on the hinge means of one piece with the spider, the hinge means being a hinge sleeve, and the stop means comprise a lever with a shoulder which can be moved on the leg into positions such that it selectively abuts against one of the teeth to limit the angle through which the leg opens.

12. (New) The tripod according to claim 3, in which the toothed means comprise a plurality of teeth angularly offset with respect to each other on the hinge means of one piece with the spider, the hinge means being a hinge sleeve, and the stop means comprise a lever with a shoulder which can be moved on the leg into positions such that it selectively abuts

against one of the teeth to limit the angle through which the leg opens.

13. (New) The tripod according to claim 5 in which a free length is provided on the hinge sleeve which does not interfere with the stop means so that when the stop means are positioned on the free length the legs can be folded back between the operating position and the non-operating position.

14. (New) The tripod according to claim 5 in which the lever is provided with an operating appendage which is accessible from the side opposite the spider when the legs are in the operating position.

15. (New) The tripod according to claim 6 in which the lever is provided with an operating appendage which is accessible from the side opposite the spider when the legs are in the operating position.

16. (New) The tripod according to claim 5 in which the lever is resiliently stressed towards a position in which it engages with a tooth distance from the free length.

17. (New) The tripod according to claim 6 in which the lever is resiliently stressed towards a position in which it engages with a tooth distance from the free length.

18. (New) The tripod according to claim 7 in which the lever is resiliently stressed towards a position in which it engages with a tooth distance from the free length.

19. (New) The tripod according to claim 2 in which the support is mounted on a column which is movably engaged in the spider in an adjustable manner.

20. (New) The tripod according to claim 3 in which the support is mounted on a column which is movably engaged in the spider in an adjustable manner.